

SITUATION REPORT NO. 35
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: May 1, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: To date, seven people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.
3. DAMAGES: The 640 residents of Pembina, who left their homes on April 22, remain evacuated until officials are certain that the water system will meet their usage demands. City officials are also waiting for water to recede from the I-29 exit leading to the city. Since evacuation, residents have been staying at private homes. Flood waters are remaining well within the city's dikes. The Red River at Pembina still remains above its previous flood-of-record level of 53.8 feet. The level on May 1 was 54.16 feet, a 0.20-foot drop during the past 24 hours. The river crested at 54.94 feet on April 26. There are no gauges for the Pembina River at Pembina, but upstream in Neche, the river was at 22.65 feet, a 0.60-foot decrease during the past 24 hours.

The Red River continues its gradual descent at gauging sites in North Dakota. The Red River at Drayton measured 43.66 on May 1, a 0.37-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The river crested at Drayton at 45.55 feet on April 25; flood stage is 32 feet. Upstream in Grand Forks, where the gauge is out of service, the National Weather Service estimates the river level was at 44.15 feet on May 1, dropping 0.81-feet during the past 24 hours. The river at Grand Forks had crested at 54.2 feet on April 22; flood stage is 28 feet.

The N.D. Department of Health has received a few reports of children slipping on stairs during cleanup efforts in Grand Forks. Two cases of chickenpox were reported at the shelter in Mayville. Health officials believe the children had contracted the illness prior to evacuation because chickenpox has a two- to three-week incubation period. Staff has been sent to the shelter to obtain additional information.

Approximately 15 homes in Barnes County are without emergency access because of flooded roads or driveways.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The Salvation Army assisted 1,939 Grand Forks area residents on April 30 during the first day of operation of its supply distribution center in Grand Forks at South Forks Plaza. Additionally, 925 people received vouchers for food, clothing, gas and long-distance transportation. The Salvation Army is also providing cleaning supplies for flood recovery efforts in Wahpeton and is distributing flood relief and recovery supplies in Devils Lake. The Salvation Army reports that more than 500 volunteers, officers and employees are participating in "Operation We Care" relief and recovery efforts in eastern North Dakota.

The American Red Cross sheltered 580 flood evacuees on April 29 at four locations. As evacuees return to the Grand Forks area, the number of meals served has increased by 4,000 a day. The Red Cross is now operating 23 fixed feeding locations and 21 mobile kitchens in North Dakota. On April 29, the Red Cross served 14,663 meals for a total of 157,914 meals to date.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Governor Schafer has appointed Dina Butcher, director of the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (OIA), as state coordinator for disaster housing. OIA officials are working with representatives of the city of Grand Forks, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), N.D. Division of Emergency Management, and N.D. University System to secure temporary housing for Grand Forks flood evacuees. Short- and long-term plans include securing motel and apartment space, dormitory rooms, and travel trailers and manufactured homes for evacuees.

The Governor has designated the N.D. Department of Agriculture and the N.D. Department of Health as the lead agencies for coordinating cleanup of flood-damaged fertilizers, pesticides and other agricultural chemicals. The two agencies will work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Four collection sites will be established in the Red River Valley. Producers and applicators with flood-damaged chemicals can obtain assistance by calling the Agriculture Disaster Response Center (ADRC) at (888) 337-8632.

Pembina County has begun recovery efforts as city of Drayton officials lift a mandatory evacuation and allow residents to return. However, no one is allowed to enter Drayton after 8 p.m. and a 10 p.m. curfew is in effect. The National Guard has sent a 3,000-gallon water tank and a semi tractor-trailer filled with bottled water to the city of Walhalla, which has had a limited supply of water since a water main broke on April 28. In rural areas, law enforcement officials are checking homes west of Pembina for diesel fuel leaks.

Efforts continue to supply water to United Hospital in Grand Forks. An 8,000-gallon tanker and three reverse osmosis units will supply water to the hospital. A working laboratory will be established at the hospital for microbiology testing of the hospital's water supply. The

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will assign three additional staff members to Grand Forks to assist with these efforts.

A CDC environmental assessment team inspected damages at the law enforcement building, a church, a school, two houses and a restaurant. The team will be developing general recommendations for cleanup.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will have three inspectors assigned to Grand Forks to help with flood recovery efforts, including inspections of food processing plants in Grand Forks.

North Dakota Agricultural Mediation Service (NDAMS) negotiators have joined the staff at Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) that are being established throughout North Dakota for disaster victims. Negotiators will provide assistance for financially-stressed farmers and ranchers. The DRCs are also staffed by representatives of N.D. Department of Human Services, Job Service North Dakota, Social Security, FEMA's Hazard Mitigation program, Internal Revenue Service and the Small Business Administration. To date, approximately 1,400 North Dakotans have sought information at the DRCs.

As missions are completed, the N.D. National Guard is reducing forces assigned to flood recovery work. The National Guard had 682 members on duty on April 30, including nine who were working three teams to remove animal carcasses from waterways in Logan, McIntosh and McLean Counties. Contractors have been hired to bury the animals. To date, National Guard members had 39 missions in progress, one pending mission and 235 completed.

Approximately 2,500 Red River Valley evacuees have sought assistance at the Flood Information Center in Minot. FEMA, the American Red Cross and the Small Business Administration have representatives at the center.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>". The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The N.D. Department of Agriculture also posts flood-related information on its home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/agr/>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

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